

# Sovereign Abundant Grace

Manifested in the Last Illness and Death

OF

RUTH FENNER.

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"Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" (*Zech. iii. 2*).

"He hath done all things well," (*Mark vii. 37*).

"Underneath are the everlasting arms," (*Deut. xxxiii. 27*).

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE subject of this record was brought up by her parents to attend the Calvinistic faith, but when about the age of 17, commenced to attend the Church of England, and was "baptised" and "confirmed" before she was 20. At the age of 22, she came under the influence of the "High" Church of England, and about five years thereafter (in 1908) joined the Roman Catholics. She being naturally kind, their "charity" appealed to her; and soon she was by profession a "Catholic," and remained in this profession until the 10th May, 1925, when, solemnly and deliberately, she renounced that faith. It will be clearly seen in the following record, that it was no mere fickleness of mind that led to this change, but the result of the rich and mighty grace of God effectually searching her out "in the cloudy and dark day" of heavy affliction—a sheep of Christ's fold (Ezek. xxxiv. 12). That it was no dead, cold, angry "Protestantism," too, was abundantly revealed; for with what evident feeling she said of her former associates: "How I wish they might enjoy the blessing I feel!"—a wish truly shared by her sorrowing kindred.

It is not desired—she herself would never allow—that any excuse should be made for her having imbibed the heresies of Rome. She knew and acknowledged her sin. And she was sweetly pardoned through the blood of Christ for this and every sin. But it would indeed be well if those responsible for perverting the truth and beguiling unstable souls (2 Peter ii. 1—3, 14), had it laid upon their hearts how grievous is the wickedness which they have prescribed (Isa. x. 1). Her natural honesty precluded her remaining in the Anglican Church, where she found clergy, who had solemnly vowed their belief in the 39 Articles; teaching and practising quite contrary to them. But what a proof is her case that natural sincerity of itself will not save an immortal soul; for she left the hypocrisy of the Anglican clergy for the superstitions of the Roman! It is, however, our firm belief that God had planted the seed of eternal life



## INTRODUCTION.

in her soul which, though smothered by the accumulated rubbish and worldliness of false religion, could not die. "*If possible*, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. xxiv. 24). Patient, preventing, delivering mercy came to remove the apparent possibility. Our dear sister was "preserved in Jesus Christ and called" effectually, being eternally "sanctified by God the Father" (Jude 1). Especially during the past two years a growing restlessness was now and then perceived, whilst an affinity for the truth became apparent, when certain enquiries made by her lifted the disguise by which she concealed her dissatisfaction with her then profession.

The life which God had given to her dead soul broke out into a flame at the onset of her illness—a flame which, as she expressed it, made all her former religion "just crumble away," the Lord making "all the stones of the altar as chalk stones that are beaten in sunder," so that the images should not stand up (Isa. xxvii. 9). All this work now beginning to be manifested was purely of the Holy Spirit, without any human interference or agency. Unknown to any of us, she had been in the depths of soul trouble, had cried unto the Lord, who at this critical time delivered her from the pit and from her error, and sweetly comforted her soul.

It was thought by her sister, and twice mentioned to her, that perhaps it would be proper as well as honest for her family to explain her change to her former associates in religion, who were kindly solicitous concerning her health; as she was too ill to see any but her own family. But she repeatedly expressed a desire to become strong enough to tell them herself. This opportunity never came; so with trembling hand, but with grace-strengthened heart, on the last day of her life, she dictated and signed a renunciation of her former religion, and ordered her images to be smashed. From that time she calmly awaited her dismissal, expressing now and then by word and countenance how she was being supported, and the blessed prospect that was before her.

This pamphlet is not intended to be a narrative, but is an ungarnished and authentic record of some expressions dropped from the lips of the dear departed one during her last 38 days on earth, with as little as possible of anything



external. Never will it be possible to pourtray the spiritual vitality of the truths as they came from her renewed heart in simple expressions, often in whispers; but the spiritually minded reader will not fail to detect that "pure language" which the Lord turns to all His own dear people (Zeph. iii. 9). It is felt that the publication of this gracious work of God's Spirit may be owned of Him for the furtherance of the gospel, while it is our aim to bless the Lord "who hath made known His salvation, and whose righteousness He hath openly shewed in the sight of the heathen" (Ps. xcvi. 2).

J. H. GOSDEN.

78 Buckland Road, Maidstone.





# Sovereign Abundant Grace

MANIFESTED IN THE LAST ILLNESS

AND DEATH OF RUTH FENNER

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EARLY in May, 1925, Ruth found it needful to consult a doctor, and on the 6th, after some days of severe pain, it was found necessary for her to be removed to a nursing home where, on the 10th, she underwent an operation, and where, on June 17th, she passed away.

May 10th. Her sister said, "Do you know about the operation?" "O yes; I knew last night. I want to tell you that yesterday, in great pain, that word came to me so sweetly, '*Underneath are the everlasting arms.*' I so felt them that for a few moments the pain seemed removed. I feel in higher hands than man's, I am in God's hands. It is well with me. I am safe, whatever may come."

11th, morning. "You need His help now?" "Yes; I feel He is with me. This came this morning: 'In My Father's house are many mansions; . . . I go to prepare a place for you.' I have been trying to think of that hymn, 'What cheering words are these!'" When the hymn (Gadsby's, 412) was read, she repeated with emphasis,

"And well when call'd to die."

One quoted:

"Heaven is that holy, happy place  
Where sin no more defiles," &c. (850.)

Her face lit up, and she smiled and said, "I have been thinking of those verses. *He died for me. He died for me.*" One said, "He can forgive *all* sin." She replied solemnly, "Yes, He is God, *He is God.*" She told how "Father" — had called, but that she was too ill to speak to him. Her sister said, "No creature can help you now." "That is what I feel; only One can help me now." Afternoon. One calling, said, "I am sorry to see you brought so low, but glad you are comfortable." In a whisper, but most



emphatic, "Very low but very happy." "You felt your sins all forgiven?" "Only through Christ." "When did this begin?" "On Saturday [in great pain before operation] I was trying to pray to God to teach me, and those words came, 'Underneath are the everlasting arms.' I felt quite content, quite content to be in His hands, and to leave all with Him." "Have you any desire to get better?" "If I should, I do hope, oh, I do hope I may not go back" (meaning to her follies, pleasures, &c.). "I do hope I shall not lose Him. Do pray that He will not leave me." "You have never known His presence like this before?" "No." "You now feel:

None among the sons of men,  
None amidst the heavenly train,  
Can with Jesus Christ compare;  
None so bright and none so fair?" (Berridge.)

She smiled appreciatingly and said, "I do not want any 'human man' now, I want to go direct to God." One quoted, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5). She said, "That is all I want. 'The everlasting arms' will bear me up, won't they? Do you think He will be with me in the valley? Do you think I shall get admittance?" Evening. Thought to be dying; feeble whispers. "You feel covered with Christ's righteousness?" "Nothing of my own; nothing of my own; all Christ's, all Christ's." She expressed a temporary doubt thus: "I do hope it is real; do you think it is real?" as if she felt it too good to be true: Making arrangements about her funeral, &c., with calm method, she said, "I do not want any ceremonies; only I want closer union with Jesus Christ." Asked if she had any wish about recovering, she deliberately whispered, "Thy will be done," and looked so contented. "Thought I was going last night, but if I do live I shall need Him more than ever. I dread those dark moments; I know it won't be all sunshine." Evidently the R. C. Church and her worldly entanglements were a source of fear with her, and she said, "You do not know what I have before me."

Tuesday, 12th, morning. A little revived. "I was very ill last night, but was sweetly helped. There is much before me. I do need strong faith." Apprehensive of possible difficulties respecting the R. C.'s, she said, "When I



get a little stronger, God will tell me what to say to them; I would rather tell them myself." Very solemnly, "It is so *easy* to be deceived. You know where I have been for 20 years, and I *do* want to take the right step *this time*." Jno. xiv. 16, 26 and Luke xi. 13 being quoted, she said, "Do you think He (the Holy Spirit) will teach me? I feel I have so much to unlearn." Referring to the utterance in her presence on Saturday of Latin prayers by "Father" —, she said, "Is *that* all they can do for a dying woman? Those outside things are of no use to me. How often I used to go to the church, but got nothing, *nothing*. I *tried* to believe they were right. We do want food for the soul. . . . I do not want the pleasures of the world, but [sadly] I love the world, and I have a lot to face, for you know what I have gone into. . . . *I want the truth, and that will make me free*. I feel like one out of prison, and I want to be alone with God;" meaning, as she explained, that she did not want to be persuaded into opinions by men.

Wednesday morning. "This is a new path to me; I have not trodden this way before, as you have. Shall I live to speak of His wonders? I have been in the *depths*, and I cried unto God." "And He heard you?" Reply, "And put under me the everlasting arms. Oh, it was sweet to *feel them under me*. I do fear the future, it looks dark: I need keeping. I feel I may have much to go through, but I think He will be with me. I feel too weak to think, but I can pray a little. His way is mysterious." *Afternoon*. "For some time I have felt dissatisfied with the R. C. teaching. Have *often* prayed to God, 'Lord, do teach me; lead me into the true knowledge of Thyself; lead me in the right path.'" She mentioned going to hear "Father" —, who spoke of "the" church being built upon St. Peter, and how one of the audience replied, "God would never build His church upon a poor weak man like Peter." The "priest" evaded the matter. This circumstance, with many others, confirmed her in the falseness of Rome, and how short and empty the teaching of that system is. She continued, "Have prayed that prayer lately, 'God be merciful to me *a sinner*!' I feel I am such a black sinner; oh, what dreadful sins are in my heart, the awful pride that has been shown to me!" Asked about "confession," she said, "We are obliged to go once a year, but that



gave me no relief." It was said, "No; you wanted the blood of Christ to give you true peace," to which she warmly assented. Some hymns were quoted to her, including Hart's "Gethsemane." Remembering she had a printed leaflet of this, she asked that it might be brought to her. She frequently spoke of Gadsby's Selection of Hymns, and said they were so beautiful, adding, "Ours (meaning the Roman Catholic) were so silly." Many times she said with such an expression of surprised contentment, "He hath done all things well."

14th. Ruth had read early this morning the first three verses of "Gethsemane," and said, "It says He *liked* to go where He *knew* He would suffer. O what *wonderful love*! I felt He came again, and put His arms underneath me, I felt their support. His presence was with me. When nurse came in, she said, 'You do look to be in an uncomfortable position;' but I thought I never was in a more comfortable position *in all my life*. I was looking back yesterday at my life, and oh, what I felt I cannot describe,—the sins! But this morning it was all right; I felt happy. I believe He will never leave me, though He *may* withdraw His presence. Nurse said, 'You do look happy,' and I *was*."

Saturday, May 16th. "I have felt rather dark these last two days. Have thought, 'Suppose it should be a delusion after all?' But I think it must have been real, because I felt it so sweetly. I thought I should have a new heart, but it is the same black heart; mine is *so* black and so hard. My ways have been very sinful; none could have so much sin and such evil thoughts as I have had. . . . Is it not mysterious that I should have gone into those errors? When I attended the Catholic Evidence Guild, I *tried* to be satisfied with their answers and to believe they were right, but it is just the opposite. I thought I had to *do* and to *learn*, and to get right that way. I believe I have been seeking a long time, but I could not see. Now God has done it all. It is what *He* has done. *I was obliged to cry to God*, for I found there was no one else to whom I could look. I do not feel worthy of God's mercy, and wish all of them (meaning her former religious associates) might have the same blessing God has given to me. Was thinking this morning of all that number, and I have had many kind



friends, and I do wish they might be blessed too. But it was going through a form at church, and then 'that job's jobbed,' and nothing more. . . . I do hope His presence will be with me again. When He is with me, all is right, and I can bear all the pain. *I do thirst* for the living God. He would not give me that thirst, and forsake me, would He? I said *I* would not *let* Him go, but have been thinking, 'That is not right; that was like arrogance.' Then I have thought, 'It says, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found," and suppose I am too late!'"

It was said to her: "God will hold all His people with His hand; they only hold fast to Him as He holds them." She replied, "That is just what I feel to want. I remember when a child reading in Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress' of one 'Much-afraid'; and that is what I feel I am. I am *so* afraid. Ah—, you don't know how bad my heart is, and how I love the world. O, I do hope He will keep me." Psalm lvi. 13 was quoted, which she seemed to enter into, and repeated: "'Deliver my feet from falling'; that's it." She spoke of her great ignorance and need of teaching, and said, "I do not think I shall live very long, but I do hope I may live long enough *to prove it is real*. I feel God has been so very good to me. But this morning, I could only read Psalm vi.; felt so dark; all I seemed to feel was verse 2, 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord.' I shall never now be able to manage for myself, but must depend on God *for all*. I believe He will help me." She spoke of enjoying Rutherford's hymn, and said, "*He* wrestled on toward heaven, didn't he? Won't it be wonderful to be there? We shall see Him there." Being asked if the heavy thunder storm disturbed her in the night (she was usually very sensitive in storms), she said, "No; I was able to lie quite quiet, and did not feel so much disturbed, I think, as nurse was." Reverting to the R. C.'s, she said, "I used to think of some of their doctrines, '*That* is not Scriptural, and *that* is not Scriptural.' But they profess to be keepers of the Scriptures. Suppose I should get frightened, and go back! Oh, I *do* hope I shall be kept and helped."

Monday, 18th. "I had a 'nasty' day yesterday all day. Could hear the bells at St. — Church, and knew what each clang meant. Then it came before me the awfully solemn



vow I made on joining the R. C. Church,—to adhere to it *till death*. It has been a solemn thing to me to renounce that Church. I knew it was Satan's tempting me, but could not throw it off. Was afraid to open my little book of Psalms. But later it came into my mind, 'Well, you *have* kept your vow till death,' intimating that she realised that she had now become dead to her former false religion, according to Paul in Rom. vii., to whose conversion and experience she frequently referred. "Now I do fear, having made such a mistake before, oh, I do fear being wrong again. I do not want any man-made religion. I do not want people to think I have a lot of religion, for I have not. I can only pray to God as a great sinner: 'God be merciful to me.'" Her manifest fear and awe of God's holy majesty were very striking. "I read Psalm xxiii. this morning: 'He leadeth me beside the still waters'—'the *still* waters.' It seemed so peaceful, was such an uplifting; and I want to rest there awhile, and to be led every step by the Holy Spirit. But oh, I *do* want to feel His presence now I am a little stronger, so that I may enjoy it more; for though it was very sweet, I was so weak. On Monday night I was very ill, but felt quite satisfied." Her hunger for Christ was a very real thing. She said, "I do not find it easy lying here; though comfortable, comparatively, in body, it is not easy work. I do dread those dark moments." One speaking of heaven—no sin, no conflict, no temptation, no opposition to, nor weariness in, the exercise of the full powers of the soul in worship, she said, "We cannot begin to imagine what it will be, can we?" and she seemed to rejoice in the thought of what was before her. Then when Rev. vii. 16, 17 was quoted: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, . . . for the Lamb shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters," she said, "That's the *best*: they shall thirst no more, because always satisfied *with Him*." This verse (Rev. vii. 17) has since been found to be marked in her Bible.

Tuesday, 19th. Soon after I entered the room, she broke out: "My soul *thirsteth* for the living God. I do hope when I get stronger I shall not lose these desires; that would be dreadful. If I get better, I do want to read my Bible. There used to seem nothing in it, but now I see there is so much in it." [In her illness she frequently exclaimed



about the wonders of God's rich Word, and seemed to drink it in when read to her.] Now very drowsy. "I am so tired. '*So He giveth His beloved sleep; that's the sleep I want, sweet sleep.*' Later, 2 Cor. iv. and v. being read, she said, "'Cast down, but not destroyed; 'Absent from the body, . . . present with the Lord.' 'We walk by faith, not by sight.' I thought I had to walk by sight, and reason it all out; but I know now." She seemed troubled because she could not retain the sweet enjoyments of the presence and promise of God; yet entered into the truth of the unchangeableness of God, and that safety did not depend upon our changing feelings, repeating: "He does not change like we do. If He did, it would be sad for us. But He is the same. But, oh, I *do* want Him." She spoke of heaven, and said, "There will be no more sea there, but rivers." Then it was quoted: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (Psalm xlv. 4), and asked, "This is the love of God: you have had a sip?"—"Yes, but I do want *more.*"

Tuesday night. [After second operation, very ill.] "*Dear Jesus,*" repeated over and over again. "I do love Jesus. Don't leave me, Jesus. He *has not* left me, He *never will* leave me now. He hath done all things well. Washed—washed. So sweet; river of water of life." [A fit of bad pain, during which she said]: "*He* suffered; *He* suffered. So tired. He will give me sweet rest. It won't be long now. He hath done *all things* well. God has been a *good God* to me. It is wonderful. Pray, if His *heavenly will*, He may keep back the cough, so that I may get a little sleep. I have asked Him to do it." [She soon got quite a nice sleep for about an hour, and when she awakened, seemed comforted to think God had answered her prayer.]

Wednesday, early morning. To the surprise of all, she rallied a little, and said, "I was near the edge of the water last night, very near, and it looked *so* dark. I felt I could not go over alone." Very solemnly: "I *shall* want Him *then.*" Later, expressed disappointment. Had read Ps. cxiii., but found "no message" for her in it. "You don't *know* how I want Him. I have been praying hard. My soul quite *aches* for His presence." Psalm xxxviii. 9: "Lord, all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from



Thee," being quoted, she expressed relief, and said, "He knows, does not He?" When the verse commencing,

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Utter'd, or unexpress'd," (Montgomery)

was quoted, she seemed quite encouraged, as if it met her weak and weary condition, and she repeated, "Uttered or unexpressed."

21st. "I feel quite content to leave myself in the doctors' hands. It is God who must give them skill; it won't be of any use, unless He teaches them. . . I am not like you; I have been *such* a sinner, and fear sometimes I am too late. Was thinking about the foolish virgins; and then about the woman to whom Jesus said, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the dogs'; and I feel like that. But *she* said, 'The dogs eat of the crumbs under their master's table'; and oh, if He would only give *me a crumb!*" It was said, "Jesus Christ died for sinners." She replied, "And He died *for me*, though I am a sinner." It was asked: "You *hope* He died for your sins?"—Reply: "Sometimes I *feel sure* He died for me. But oh, I do want His *presence*. When I was at St. ——— Church" (naming a "High" Anglican church she used to attend more than 20 years ago), "I began praying that little prayer: 'Teach me the truth, and the truth will make me free.' I didn't know what 'the truth' was. It was my dreadful pride made me adhere to error. I was afraid to remain in the room to hear any of you read the Bible, for fear it would prove I was wrong, and *that Jesus Christ was not in the R. C. Church*. Now I know where is all I want. If only He will come to me! I know where '*the truth*' is. I don't want to depend on any man, but be taught by Jesus Christ. Yet God uses His servants, and makes them helpful to His people. I would rather lie here than go into the wrong way. But *He will* teach me, won't He? I could not see any possible way out of my profession. Sometimes I thought, if I could go right away where I should not be known, and told nobody I was a R. Catholic. But now He has sent this affliction, and He has done it all. It is wonderful. . . . I can hear that *dreadful* bell (Sanctus Bell) at St. ———; it worried me all the other day. I try to forget it. But I have been greatly helped." *Evening*. Hymn 410 (Gadsby's) read: "My Jesus has done all things well," which she said



was beautiful, and desired it to be repeated. She also asked for 412: "What cheering words are these!" She seemed to be anticipating heaven, and spoke of her burial, then said, "The other night I felt I should like to go. Oh, to be with Him, and to see Him!"

22nd. "You don't *know* how I long for Him; but I cannot expect much comfort *here*, because I have been *such* a sinner. In this affliction God has shown me the falseness of the R. C. religion, and *I do thank Him* for bringing me out of it. I feel when I get stronger I would like to see 'Father' —, and tell him myself how that religion all *crumbled away*, and of the sweet peace God has brought to me. But perhaps, if I should get strong again, I should feel I could say nothing; only I feel at present I would just like to tell them." She spoke of the "*marvellous plan*" of salvation, and that the Son of God should have died for *her* sins. The *one sacrifice* of Christ was mentioned, and that He would no more suffer; at which she seemed gratified, and said: "No more to suffer," and mentioned the falseness of "the mass." She said for the past two days St. Paul's word (Gal. vi. 17): "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus," had been on her mind, but she did not quite understand it. [We would not presume in so sacred a matter, but may not the Holy Spirit have made this word, together with its connection: "From henceforth let no man trouble me," a prophecy concerning our dear departed one? It is at least gratifying that she was not molested, but went down to her grave in peace.] "I have been thinking," she said, "of Paul's conversion, that *he* was brought away from a false religion. He thought he was right, but found mercy because he did it "ignorantly in unbelief." But I do not feel I have always sinned ignorantly. I feel *I* am the chief of sinners. But Jesus Christ died for me; I must hold on to *that*."

23rd. "I have been reading the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. He says he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and I hope God will give *me* grace not to be ashamed of it. I do hope I shall not have to go through any more operations, but I could go through anything if Jesus Christ were with me. I do not see Him, but He has not forsaken me; I feel He is 'behind' me." One quoted to her: "My Beloved standeth behind our wall,



... showing Himself through the lattice" (Song ii. 9); saying, "The wall may mean our mortality; the lattice may mean the Scriptures." She replied consideringly: "Yes; but I do want another touch, I do want to hear His voice. If He would say to me, 'Thy sins are all forgiven.' I have been *such* a sinner, but I hope He has forgiven me; only if He would just say it to me. You don't know how black I am. No one's heart can be as bad as *mine*; dreadful thoughts fill me sometimes." It was replied: "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy" (Prov. xiv. 10). She said: "That's it; *it is between God and my soul*. Some people seem to be blessed, and they have no more trouble." It was said, "But that is not according to the Scriptures, which show how faith is tried." She replied, "And it is not according to *me*." Later. Ruth spoke of heaven, and said: "*I shall see Him face to face*. Oh, I wish I could go now; I wish I could go *now*. I could not bear in my weak body that *glorious* sight of Him." John xiv. was read, which she seemed to enjoy, and she spoke of "the comforting words" Jesus spake to His disciples. She said, "To think that I turned away from the holy Scriptures, and wanted other books; what *wasted* years! I feel I shall never weary of the Scriptures now. They are so wonderful. I do want God to teach me what they mean. I want to be meditating upon heavenly things; do not want anything else. I think *it must be God* who has given me such a thirst, and I believe He will come again; but I must be patient." She spoke solemnly of Christ's cry: "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and seemed to have entered into the solemnity of that part of the Saviour's sufferings as being the bitterest of all. She said with emphasis: "I cannot think why people do not love Jesus Christ; but they do not know, and *I* did not know; they do not want to know, and *I* did not want to know. They did not know He was the Son of God, and though they saw Him and heard Him, they cast Him out." The mystery of the Person of Christ, that though He became Man, He did not cease to be God, being mentioned to her, she said: "He *was always* the Son of God."

Monday, 25th. Ruth spoke of temptation through the previous day, Sunday. It was suggested to her that she



ought to have persevered more in the R. C. Church, and then she would have been successful, etc. She realised it was Satan, but had no power over him; "prayers" she used to say while in that error, were continually being suggested to her mind, and she wanted to forget them. She could only cry, "Give me Christ, or else I die." "And," she added, "I *shall* die without *Him*. You don't *know* how I want Him. If He would only come again! I feel I must go on praying, even if He does not grant me much comfort." She was reminded of Job's saying, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Replied, "Yes, I feel that too; but I *believe* He will come again."

26th. "I did want to tell you what a nice help I had early this morning. Felt I could *pray*. It was wonderful. I lay here and *prayed*. Yesterday (in temptation) I tried to pray, oh, so hard; but this morning I said, 'Lord, I *believe*; help Thou mine unbelief;' and I felt such sweet peace; I rested. Then this word came: 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect *rest* whose mind is stayed on Thee.' I thought, 'Why *me*? Why should I be plucked as a brand from the burning?' I *might* have been *left*." It was said, "It is not of works, lest any man should boast." Reply: "Works? I have no works. *What* I deserve! It does not do to think about. But the Lord is my Shepherd. When I opened my little Book this morning, it was at Psalm xxiii.: 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want'; and I believe I shall not. It was so peaceful. Then the verse:

" ' How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds  
In a *believer's* ear !

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear,'

came to my mind. I had often sung those words, but *He is everything to me now*. I do not want the things of this world. To think I should have loved them and wanted them! The nights and days do not seem long now. The nurses sometimes ask me if I would like the newspaper to read; but I have the Bible, if God will give me light to understand it and strength to read it. I do not seem to want anything else, there is enough there; I do not want to have a desire for anything else. Some of the Psalms seem made for me; it is wonderful how they express my feelings, and fit my case. What wasted years I look back upon!



How mysterious God should permit me to go so far off! *Yet His eye was upon me even then.* I would rather lie on this bed of affliction with the love of Jesus in my soul, than enjoy any worldly pleasure. To think He chose *me* to be one of His believers!" Ruth asked where it was written: "By grace are ye saved;" as that word had been on her mind. Ephesians i. and ii. were read to her, and she seemed to drink into those rich chapters. Then she responded: "'No more strangers and foreigners.' To think He should have chosen *me*, is it not wonderful?" Those who were favoured to hear her, will not soon forget the expression she would use in such exclamations; how amazed she seemed at the goodness of God to her.

"I shall *have* unbelief, but He will never leave me. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that wait for Him.' J——, if I should die to-day, *I should be in glory!* He has been good to me. Shall I *ever* thank Him for His wonderful goodness? Help me to praise Him. I do want realities, am so fearful of an emotional religion. Have been thinking of some of those Sankey's hymns, and how some people seem always full of joy, and it does not seem quite right. Of course, God may bless some more than others; but *I do want to be sure it comes from Him.* I thought about the house that was 'empty, swept, and garnished,' and the evil spirit returning. Oh, I do hope it will not be so with me. But Jesus is my Shepherd: He knows my weakness, He *knows* I am a poor sinner, and *He* will lead me. I do feel so peaceful when I think I am one with those seeking God. This morning I felt the word come, 'Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen to thee,' and felt very solemn." It was explained that the tendency of the gospel was to incline those who felt its power, against all sin; but alas, we all have sin, and are sinners; therefore it is declared, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous;" to which she replied, "And He is a powerful Advocate, is not He? I do hope, when I feel sin, I shall be able to cry to Him to be *my* Advocate."

Thursday, 28th. Ruth said she had been kept quiet since Monday, respecting the temptation of Sunday. She expressed her great desire to feel a soft, repentant heart, and



said she kept praying to God "to pierce her heart through and through with a proper sorrow for her sin." "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me," had been her constant prayer lately, for she had so feared being a hypocrite. John i. was read, and she spoke of the high privilege of the disciples, but added, as if to correct a desire to have been living then, "It was *by faith* they knew Him to be the Son of God," and spoke of it being "a wonderful mystery." She seemed to rejoice in the truth (which was mentioned to her) that "This Man receiveth sinners;" and that He is the *Friend of sinners* (Matt. xi. 19), and said how it suited her. She also said (referring to her great desire not to be deceived), "I do not think it could have been a delusion, for I *have tasted* a very little of the streams of the river. But I am only a beginner, and I do want more." *Evening.* To her sister M. she expressed how sometimes she wished she might lie back and go to the Lord now. This was very remarkable, seeing how full of life's interests she had always been. She was heard several times during her illness to say, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with His likeness."

29th. Read to her Toplady's hymn, "When languor and disease invade," which she said was beautiful, and that she desired to

"Lie passive in His hands,  
And know no will but His,"

respecting her affliction. Then she quoted:

"His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower."—*Cowper.*

When the hymn was finished for her, she said, "Yes, 'God is His own Interpreter;' *we* cannot rightly interpret, but *He* can." She spoke vehemently about the love of Christ, and said it was "past knowledge." "What *wonderful* love! I never thought His love to His own was so wonderful. Nothing in all the world can be compared with being one of His: a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth, seeking the heavenly city." She spoke of the possibility of becoming strong enough to come home, but seemed quite resigned, saying, "I only want to lie and meditate on Him. I do not want worldly pleasures; I shall never want them again."



*They won't mix.* I tried to mix religion and worldly pleasures, but it all failed. Does it not say, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon'? " She spoke of heaven, and said, "Jesus will gather all His people together, and won't it be wonderful if *we* are among them?" Speaking of David and Paul, Toplady and Cowper and other saints, she said, "*They* are there;" and as if anticipating joining them, "Is it not wonderful?" She expressed having found "many companions" in the Scriptures, but, as if that were too great a claim for her to make, she said, "God taught David wonderfully, and made him a great king. I do feel the Psalms fit my case, and they seem full of prophecy too,"—intimating that she saw the Lord Jesus Christ in them. On leaving her, she expressed fervent desire for "another sweet glimpse," and that she must press on after the knowledge of Christ.

30th. "I awoke with sweet peace in my soul, and could and did from my heart say, 'Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thy sins, and cleanseth all thine iniquities.' I have had such sweet rest the last three days; I do hope the enemy will not come near. I want to hold tight to the Lord; *all my thoughts centre around Him.* I do not want other things to intrude." She sent a message to her brother and sister away: "Tell them God is very good, He does not allow the evil one to worry me." She enjoyed the reading of parts of Rev. xxi. and xxii., also Jno. xiv. Referring to those with whom she had been connected in religion, she said, "What joy it would be to me to tell them all I had found that *real presence*! but they would not understand it, would they? *Evening.* To her sister A., more than once she said, "I shall sleep sweet in Jesus. 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' Praise the Lord, O my soul." Also she requested hymn 410 to be read, "My Jesus hath done all things well."

June 3rd. She wrote a loving message to her invalid mother, whom she had not seen now for a month; in which she said, "God has been so good to me in this affliction, it has been well worth going through. I feel He will never leave me nor forsake me now, and I know He will be good to you, my darling Mother, in His own good time. I pray for you continually."



To one who called that morning, she expressed her admiration of God's great goodness to her in preserving her from much pain and giving "sweet sleep;" also how He had kindly kept Satan away from her of late. Speaking of another afflicted one, she said: "God does wonderfully help His people, doesn't He? When people used that expression, 'God's people,' I did not understand, but what a marvellous thing to think that *I* should feel Him precious, and hope *I* am one of His, what *wonderful love!*" Then she spoke with evident grief of her sinful life, and said, "I feel I fought against His church;" and seemed unable to find words to express her abhorrence and shame. "But I *do* want to *feel real* repentance; I *do* feel sorry I have been such a sinner, but —," indicating she wanted to feel "love and grief compound an unction." "That's it," she said, "love and grief. Only God knows who are His people. I often think about J., he is so kind." It was said, "Sincerity and kindness are not grace." "No," she replied, very seriously. She spoke of the Scriptures being such food to her soul, saying, "We want the Bread of life, do we not? I do enjoy lying here, meditating upon the Scriptures read to me." She quoted with manifest understanding Jno. xvi. 33: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," and added: "*He* is greater than the world, isn't He? I feel quite satisfied with His will. He *has* been good to me." It was told her what a friend, hearing of the Lord's mercy to her, had said: "Another jewel in Christ's crown!" by which she seemed quite overcome, and after a pause said, "A jewel in Christ's crown? What *me?*" [An entry of this in her note book reads: "'Another jewel in Christ's crown!' Oh God, grant that I may indeed be counted worthy through the merits of my Saviour!"] "I do not feel the time long, for though I am much alone, I feel Jesus is not far off; but I do want another visit." Read to her Rom. vii. and viii. She seemed to understand Paul's conflict. June 4th: Ruth spoke gratefully of all the comforts she enjoyed, and added: "But these are not my God. I might have been lying here filled with pain, and suffering the devil's temptations; he is very powerful. How kind God is to me!"

She seemed to enter into the difference between the letter and the spirit of truth, and expressed how she wanted



God to cause her to feel more of the power of His Word in her heart, lamenting hers being the experience of Paul: "When I would do good, evil is present with me." She mentioned the changes from confidence and peace to trouble, expressed in the Psalms, and how wonderfully they entered into her own experience, which had been a source of consolation to her, and said, "When once you have tasted His goodness, nothing else will really satisfy.—Oh, the presence of God! and no sin! and no thirst!" she exclaimed when heaven was mentioned. It was said: "It will be a fight here, but no warfare in heaven; and the soldier here is not alone, there is the Captain of salvation." She said, "Yes, *Jesus* is the Captain."

5th: [Very weak and tired; unable to talk much.] Said she was still waiting for the Lord to *speak* the word *forgiveness*. Her face beamed when the love of Christ was named, and she said, "*Love!*" as if she apprehended its vastness.

8th. "I have been reading the Acts of the Apostles and the Romans, and I cannot think why they say Peter was a pope more than the others. Why didn't I read my Bible for myself?"

12th. [Weaker; wasting.] Ruth seemed tried as to whether what she had felt was really from God, or only the result of her own thoughts. "But," she said, "I do not want anything else," (meaning, than divine realities). "I believe God has given me this desire. Is it not written: 'He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with good things'? I do hope if I get stronger, I shall not lose these desires." Toplady's hymn was quoted: "Happiness, thou lovely name," which attracted her, especially that this pure happiness in the knowledge of Christ, known a little here, would issue in eternal happiness in His presence. 1 Corinthians xv. being read to her, and the doctrine of union with Adam and with Christ being referred to, she repeated: "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," and said, "Is it not wonderful?" and, as often, seemed lost in thought.

14th. Asked for hymn: "Happiness, thou lovely name," to be read. "You have tasted this?"—"Yes, but I do want more."



15th. [Extremely weak.] Said she had not from the beginning really wanted to get better, but had tried to take nourishment, etc., for our sakes. Being asked if she were willing to live or to die, she replied: "Yes, but the wish to go is stronger than the other."—"To be with Christ, which is far better?" Reply: "Yes, oh, I wish I could go! How good God is to me! wonderful, surpassing thought!"

16th, morning. "Are you comfortable?" "Very; I am *so happy*. I shall 'awake in His likeness.'" She desired to write a declaration respecting her former faith, having now no prospect of recovering to tell her friends personally. Being too weak to write the whole, she dictated the following declaration, which she signed with her own hand:

"I renounced the Roman Catholic Church on May 10th, 1925, and declare it to be utterly false.

RUTH FENNER.

"June 16th, 1925."

She then directed that her images should be smashed. This done, she wished her sister to read about the Good Shepherd (Jno. x.), after which she said, "How nice!" Hymn 412, "What cheering words are these!" which had become a favourite with her, was read, also one on heaven. Asked if she had any message for her brother H., she replied, "O yes, we have often written to each other; tell him we were both wrong, and I do hope he will find what I have before he comes where I am." *Afternoon*. [Evidently sinking.] "You are in the valley now?" "Yes, and I am ready to go." "It is a shadow." "Yes, but there is light in the shadow." "What about your sins? Is your conscience peaceful?" "I feel this word has been given to me, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee: go and sin no more.'" She seemed anxious to let us know that a "priest" had called from St. — Church, but that she did not see him, adding, "I do not want any priests." "You have found something better?" "Yes, something *better*." Paul's desire was named to her, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." She said, "*Nothing could be better than that*." She seemed pleased to be reminded of John xiv. 3, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself," and said, "I have been thinking of those words, 'Ever with the Lord.'" Parts of Rev. xxi. and xxii. were



read, to which she responded by her countenance, and seemed to much enjoy them.

In the night of Tuesday, June 16th to 17th. [Rapidly failing.] "You need the Lord Jesus Christ now?" "Yes, I do." "You feel Him precious?" No reply. "You *want* to feel Him precious again?" "I think I *shall*." After a pause, with such satisfaction in her countenance: "*He is helping me.*" [Now only partially conscious at times.] Asking that her lips might be moistened, she added, "Whilst we are *waiting*," meaning, I presumed, waiting the summons higher. Indistinctly I thought I heard her whisper, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." During about two hours of unconsciousness to all around, she very gradually grew weaker, and gently breathed her last at 1.25 a.m., 17th June, 1925, and so "fell asleep in Jesus."

"Hail, mighty Jesus! how divine  
Is Thy victorious sword!  
The stoutest rebel must resign  
At Thy commanding word.

Deep are the wounds Thy arrows give;  
They pierce the hardest heart;  
Thy smiles of grace the slain revive,  
And joy succeeds to smart.

Still gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh;  
Ride with majestic sway;  
Go forth, sweet Prince, triumphantly,  
And make Thy foes obey.

And when Thy victories are complete,  
When all the chosen race  
Shall round the throne of glory meet,  
To sing of conquering grace,

O may my blood-wash'd soul be found  
Among that favour'd band!  
And I, with them, Thy praise will sound  
Throughout Immanuel's land."